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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/757,980	01/13/2004	Rodney Brenneman	021496-000410US	4249

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TOWNSEND AND TOWNSEND AND CREW, LLP
TWO EMBARCADERO CENTER
EIGHTH FLOOR
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94111-3834

EXAMINER

FLANAGAN, BEVERLY MEINDL

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3739

DATE MAILED: 11/04/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/757,980	Applicant(s) BRENNEMAN ET AL.	
	Examiner Beverly M. Flanagan	Art Unit 3739	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 9, 10 and 14-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5-8 and 11-13 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.


Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.


BEVERLY M. FLANAGAN
 PRIMARY EXAMINER

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)</p> <p>2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)</p> <p>3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2/04; 10/04; 5/05</u>.</p> | <p>4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.</p> <p>5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)</p> <p>6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.</p> |
|--|---|

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statements filed February 18, 2004, October 14, 2004 and May 20, 2005 have been made of record and the references cited therein have been considered by the examiner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-4, 10, 14, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tartaglia et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/01200178).

In regard to claims 1, 10 and 14, Tartaglia et al. teach an endoscope 10 having a steerable distal portion 14 where a guide 36 used to impart a desired curvature is advanced into the steerable distal portion 24 to or near the distal tip of the portion 24 (see page 5, section 0051 and Figure 2). As broadly as claimed, the device of Tartaglia et al. is configured to preclude advancement of the guide 36 to the steerable distal portion 24 because it is specifically contemplated that the guide 36 can be inserted to a point that is proximal to the tip of distal portion 24 (see above). **With further respect to claim 10 and in regard to claim 2**, a guide controller 41 is used to selectively rigidize and relax guide 36 during use within a patient (see page 5, section 0053). **In regard to**

claims 3 and 4, guide 36 is slidably disposed within the length of the endoscope body 21 and may freely slide entirely through the passive proximal portion 22, the controllable portion 28 and the steerable distal portion 24 (see page 5, section 0052). **With further respect to claim 10 and in regard to claims 19 and 20**, see page 8, sections 0070 and 0071.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 5, 9, 15-18, 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tartaglia et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/01200178) in view of Chang (U.S. Patent No. 5,779,624).

In regard to claim 5, Tartaglia et al. are silent as to the guide 36 being disposed within an overtube. However, Chang discloses a similar endoscope introduction device comprised of a tubular member 12 that serves as an overtube for a colonoscope 38 (see Figures 5A-5D). Chang thus demonstrates that overtube devices for insertion an endoscope are well known in the art. Accordingly, it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the guide 36 of Tartaglia et al. in an overtube, such as the one disclosed by Chang, as a means for introducing the endoscope. **In regard to claims 9, 15 and 17**, Chang teaches an

alternate embodiment of tubular member 12 having a slot 62 to removably receive the endoscope 38 (see Figure 6). **In regard to claims 16 and 18**, see the above rejection for claim 1. **In regard to claims 21 and 22**, see col. 7, lines 7-23 of Chang.

Allowable Subject Matter


Claims 6-8, and 11-13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Beverly M. Flanagan whose telephone number is (571) 272-4766. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Linda C.M. Dvorak can be reached on (571) 272-4764. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3739

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Beverly M. Flanagan
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3739
